



# The Ramford Reporter

Your Local Area Guide to Current Events

Volume 5, Issue 3

## Fish kill, hundreds are dead!

Rockland City-  
Barry Nosy, Staff Writer

Thursday morning as Earl E. Rizer, a local waterman of the Ramford River, prepared to go for a boat ride, he discovered a foul stench coming from the river. To his surprise he found thousands of assorted fish floating belly-up. He immediately called the authorities.

Mr. Rizer suspects that it is related to the extraordinary amounts of rain that has occurred in the past few days. Mr. Rizer is quoted as saying, "This rain has something to do with this fish kill." He continued, "When that stench first hit my nose, I knew something was wrong. Terribly wrong! But that smell was not only of dead fish. There was some other stench I can't quite pin point."

The pollution appears to have spread along a 4-mile

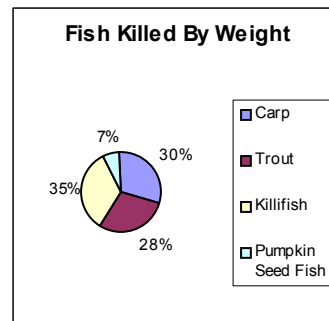
stretch of the Ramford River. A state reporter estimates a loss of approximately 1.1 tons, or nearly 5,000 fish.

A scientist with the Department of Wildlife and Recreation, Pat D. Beavers, is investigating this catastrophe. "We have not seen a fish kill of this magnitude since the last time we had a massive fish kill on the Ramford River. This could have been caused by almost anything," Pat continued saying, "The extremely high levels of precipitation that we've witnessed in the past day has caused a chain of events that might or might not be related. At present we are investigating a number of pollutants that could be responsible for this catastrophic event."

Governor Terry Pin said she would issue a federal investigation of several of

the large industrial plants in the area, including the local nuclear and sewage treatment plants. In addition, water quality tests have been commissioned by the state, although results have not yet been reported.

At this time no one knows what caused the fish kill. What precisely killed so many different types of fish? Where did this murderous pollutant come from? It's a mystery that needs solving!



Percent of fish killed in Ramford River according to type of species found.

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## Tropical Storm leaves Ramford County under six inches of water

Ramford City-  
Jason Muller,  
Staff Meteorologist

Tropical Storm Katie roared through the area Tuesday morning with wind gusts in excess of 72 mph leaving behind a path of uprooted trees and extensive flooding.

Especially hard hit was Ramford County where up to six inches of rain was reported in some areas. This broke the previous single day county rainfall record of 2.52 inches set back in 1912. Local

National Weather Service reporter, Thunder Jones, claimed "This is the heaviest rain I have seen in recent memory."

All of this water had no place to go, which led to massive flooding problems that shut down area roadways. Residents could be seen standing outside in knee-deep water trying to save their automobiles from the massive flood. "The water just continued to pile up, and before I knew it, I had

water up to my car doors!" exclaimed Jane Harrier of Ramford City. Scenes like this one were common throughout the area. In Geranium Township, locals were observed piling damaged furniture on their front lawns from their flood-ridden homes.

The extent of total property damage will not be known until the cleanup process is complete; which may take weeks. Tropical Storm Katie will certainly be one for the record books.

### Storm Rainfall Totals\* by Town \* in inches

Geranium Township	5.56
Ramford City	6.00
Putnum Township	5.75
Rockland City	4.97
County Average	5.57

## Bridge over oily water

Putnam Township-  
Olive Canola,  
Staff Traffic Reporter

Traffic was grid locked on Route 66 Wednesday evening after a semi-truck spilt its load of oil, forcing the closing of all three southbound lanes. The accident occurred at 4:56 pm on the infamous "Trouble Trap" bridge, spanning the Patinsky River.

Blinding rains from Tropical Storm Katie caused the driver of the tanker to hydroplane and spill

2,000 gallons of crude oil. One other car was involved in the accident when the jackknifed truck forced the car into the median of the roadway. Both the driver of the car and the tanker were taken to Ramford Regional Hospital where they were treated and released.

Despite the efforts of a fast acting clean-up crew, the heavy rains washed most of the oil into the river. The environmental ramifications of this addition to the Patinsky River which flows into the Ramford River remains to

be seen, but local environmentalists fear they could be harsh.



*Municipal oil spill coordinators were quick to respond to the oil spill Wednesday evening.*

## Lawn and Disorder

Geranium Township-  
Ed Yuckator, Staff Writer

Ramford County Police had their hands full last Friday evening when they made several arrests during the grand opening gala of WRBC's "Garden Studio Set" in Ramford County's Pine Barren Forest. What was supposed to be an otherwise peaceful event turned chaotic when it was disrupted by a group of angry protesters.

The protesters, a coalition of environmental groups, nearby organic farmers, and their customers, were concerned that Set creators had broken their promise to use only eco-friendly substances to maintain the Set's landscape. They fear such substances were the culprit in the recent massive fish kill.

Ramford Broadcasting Company's (WRBC) spokeswoman, Ms. Holly Wood, explained that WRBC was committed to keeping their agreement with the neighboring



*Ramford County Pine Barrens near the location of the Garden Studio Set. WRBC stands by their commitment to use eco-friendly landscaping practices so as not to harm local habitat.*

organic farms to maintain eco-friendly landscaping practices. "It is imperative that we protect the health of the actors and the crewmembers that will be filming such programs as 'Cops and Lawyers' and the hit WRBC series 'The Contraltos'. The Studio Set is located

in a nearly pristine pine forest with multiple lakes, and we would never want to harm this habitat in any way."

Protesters did not rely on WRBC statements alone, and demanded that government officials issue a full investigation of the Garden Studio Set. Mr. Ed Bigfellow, COO of WRBC, was asked to comment further on the demands. His office released a statement saying, "We are investigating the origin of the substances that caused the fish kill, and WRBC feels confident that we will be proven innocent."

For the time being, cameras are rolling and filming continues, as order has been reestablished on the lawns of WRBC's "Garden Studio Set". Further investigations are pending; as the Department of Wildlife and Recreation awaits results from this and several other potential pollution sources.

## 15th Annual Ramford County Fish Fry Festival

Hamilton Township-  
Harlen Fishmonger, Special  
Events Reporter

Fried, smoked, grilled or stewed, anyway you want to eat fish is the order of the weekend in Hamilton Township at the 15th Annual Fish Fry Festival next weekend, September 25th and 26th at the Ramford County Park.

What better excuse is there to enjoy local seafood from the Ramford River? This event always brings people together to eat, hear great music live and on-stage, and peruse more arts and crafts than imaginable for your purchasing pleasure.

People drive from all over just to enjoy our Fish Fry Festival. If you are in the area come on down from 9 am until 5 pm each day. Don't cheat yourself out of the

best weekend of food, fun, and frolic you can ever imagine!



# Something stinks! Raw sewage dumped into Ramford River

Gottago -  
Pepe Lapoo, Staff Writer

Tropical Storm Katie continued her trail of destruction in Ramford County this week when the intense rains caused a combined sewage overflow Tuesday at the Gottago Sewage Treatment Plant.

The overflow, or bypass of untreated sewage, occurred between the hours of 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm after Katie deposited nearly 6 inches of rain. Untreated sewage was sent directly into the Gottago Creek which drains into the Ramford River.

Johnny O. Spot, the treatment plant's chief operator, said the facility's designed capacity rate for sewage is 6.0 million gallons per day. Capacity had been increased to 6.4 millions gallons before the

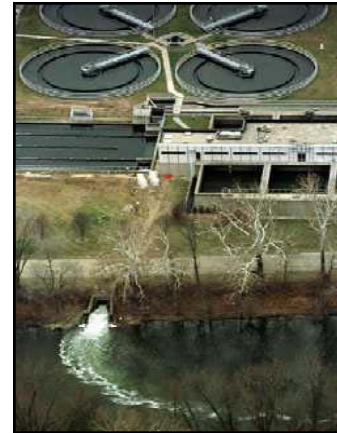
overflow process was initiated.

According to Spot, such an overflow of untreated sewage was inevitable given the plant's capacity. Local government is convening to vote on a plan to expand the plant in the event this should occur in the future.

Local health officials warn that the input of nutrients from the sewage, such as nitrogen compounds like nitrates and nitrites, as well as phosphates, could cause residents to experience some minor health risks.

Although no health problems have been reported, residents are advised to take normal precautions and stay out of

the river for the next 72 hours.



*Gottago Sewage Treatment Plant discharge site to Ramford River.*

## Thermal pollution disaster at local nuclear power plant

Owings-  
Luke Warm, Staff Writer

The Ramford County Nuclear Power Plant violated specific requirements contained in its water pollution discharge permit, issued by the Department of Wildlife and Recreation.

The violation occurred Tuesday morning when the plant shut down a transformer to perform maintenance work. The transformer provides power to the plants 2 thermal dilution pumps, which serve to lower the temperature of water heated within the plant before it is discharged into the Ramford River. A ½-mile stretch of the river near the plant hit temperatures of 97° F for a period of 3 days, 30° F higher than usual for this time of year.

It is not known yet what effect this dramatic increase in water temperature will have on aquatic life. In an interview with Fish Mann, Professor of Estuarine Ecology at Ramford College, possible impacts were spelled out. "A release of heated water of this magnitude can have several implications on the water quality near the plant. First, the fish that have made this water their habitat



*Ramford County Nuclear Power Plant*

may experience heat shock, resulting in a dramatic fish kill. Second, the increased water temperature may result in a reduction of dissolved oxygen. This is caused by a rapid increase in algae, which eventually chokes out sunlight and diminishes oxygen as the algae die."

All of these impacts are a cause for alarm; however, it is too early to assess the effects on local aquatic life. The power plant now faces a federal investigation, which will most likely lead to hefty fines. The Ramford Reporter attempted to contact officials at the plant, but were unavailable for comment.

**IF YOU LIVED  
HERE...**



**...YOU'D BE HOME  
BY NOW.**

**PLACE YOUR AD HERE**

**Meadowlands Environment  
Center**

**Introduces New School Programs  
for the 2004-2005 School year:**

Salt Marsh Senses  
Trek Among Tracks  
Up The Creek

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Created by The Meadowlands  
Environment Center, 2004



The Meadowlands Environment Center was formed to increase awareness and enjoyment of our vital ecosystem. The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission and Ramapo College of New Jersey entered into a partnership in 2003, to develop a comprehensive environmental education program for schools and the general public.

Together, the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission and the experienced team of educators from Ramapo College encourage the use of the environment as a classroom, increase awareness of the resources of the Meadowlands, and help communities recognize the critical issues that affect the Meadowlands District.



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